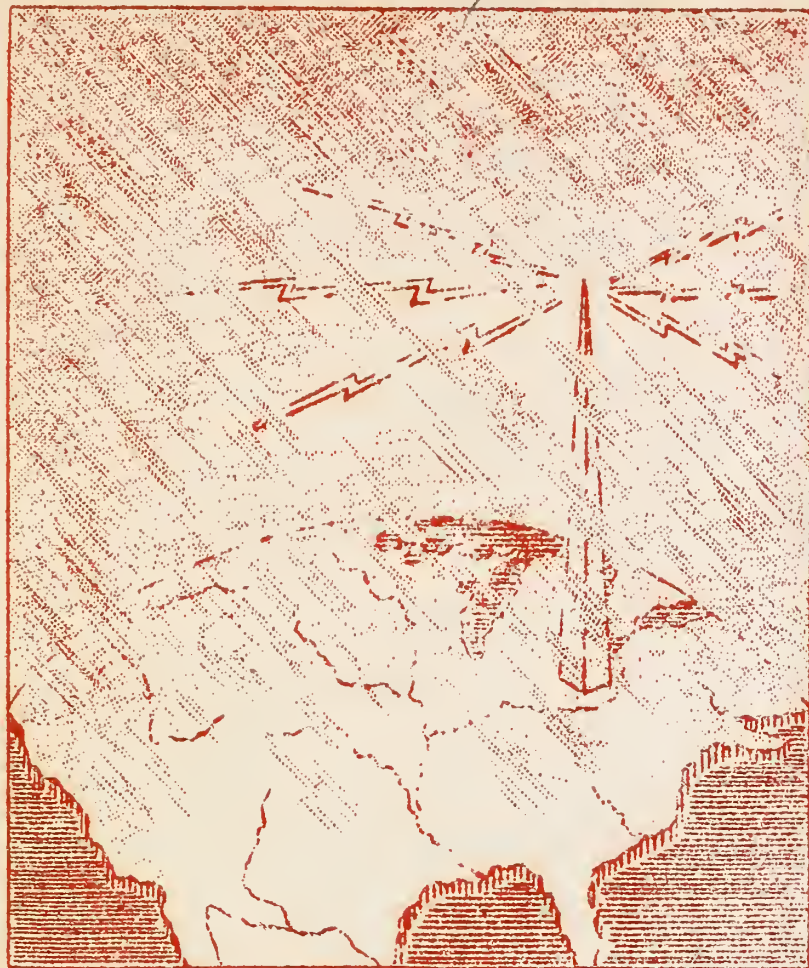


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FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

"A SACK OF CORN"

Broadcast No. 35 in the second year
in a series of dramatizations
of soil conservation

VLW, Cincinnati

December 23, 1939

1:00-1:15 pm

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
DAYTON, OHIO

SOUND Thunder and rain...

ANNOUNCER

FORTUNES WASHED AWAY!

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

ANNOUNCER

A hundred years ago, the Tennessee Valley was beautiful, watered by many rivers, rich in natural soil fertility, in forests, in a hidden store of minerals. In early summer, veils of warm haze hung over the high slopes of the mountains; the hillsides were thick with laurel in great patches of pink and purple. But five years ago, its resources had been largely wasted, unused, or exploited; its forests had been slashed, its soils depleted. To improve the agriculture and better home life, the Agricultural Extension Service and the Tennessee Valley Authority set up farm unit demonstrations throughout this vast expanse, leading the way toward better land use. Typical of these farmers is James Monday, who farms the hills of rugged Hancock County, Tennessee.....

ORGAN: Softly behind Narrator...

NARRATOR

Too much of our land is bare. It looks as if some giant had blown a hot, withering breath over its face. The soil is washed into deep, gnarled gullies. My land was that way once...when the assistant county agent came out to see me...

SOUND: Metronome...

ANNOUNCER

1934.....

SOUND: Knock on door. Door opens. Dog barks.

MONDAY

Shut up, Typo! Hello, Mr. Carpenter.

CARPENTER

Hello, Mr. Monday. How's everything?

MONDAY

You're just the man I wanted to see. Let's go around to the shed.

CARPENTER

What's up now?

MONDAY

I've got a stalk of corn with three ears on it...three good ears, mind you.

CARPENTER

I wouldn't say that was so unusual, Mr. Monday....being as you're such a good farmer.

MONDAY

Well, I farm the best I know how.

CARPENTER

And that's plenty good. That's what I wanted to.....

MONDAY

Here it is.

SOUND: Corn shucks pulled back.

CARPENTER

That's good corn, all right. How much did it make this year?

MONDAY

About 22 or 23 bushel. But Mr. Carpenter, do you know, when I came here this was the poorest piece of land in the 12th district. Gullied, man alive! All the corn raised on the whole farm could be carried in a sack. But look at me! Gabbing away like all get out, and I've not even asked you what you was here to see me about.

CARPENTER

Mr. Monday, the farmers in Hancock County are growing corn on land never meant for corn.

MONDAY

Well, now...I'll agree with you right to the core. I'd like to get into livestock farming if I could get enough permanent pasture.

CARPENTER

I think I can help you. The TVA and the Extension Service are setting up what we call "unit demonstration farms" in each district. I think, that by using a lot of phosphate you can convert most of your land to pasture.

MONDAY

Phosphate, huh?

CARPENTER

That's most of the answer. Right here in the Tennessee Valley is one of the biggest phosphate beds in the country. And if you cooperate with us, we'll help you.

MONDAY

Sure, I'm willing to try it. I'll do anything to build up my land. It's all I've got. Phosphate.....

ORGAN: Softly behind narrator.

NARRATOR

One of the greatest needs of this southern soil is phosphate. The land is hungry for phosphate. And each bag of phosphate will put back into a farmer's land somewhere in the valley the vital mineral life that has been cropped or washed out of it.

ORGAN: Up softly and out.

NARRATOR

I used phosphate on my land, plenty of it. And my daughter-in-law, Mattie, found a use for it, too....

SOUND: Metronome....

ANNOUNCER

1937....

MATTIE

William ought to be back from town before this.

MONDAY

He'll be back before long, Mattie. He's a-pinin' to go fishing.

MATTIE

He'll not go fishing until he gets that phosphate spread.

MONDAY

Now what's the reason you're in such a hurry? A day or two won't make a heap of difference.

MATTIE

I want those sacks. Ever since I made that dress out of the last phosphate sacks, I've been wanting to try my hand on a suit.

MONDAY

You know, that's remarkable, now...what fine looking clothes you can make out of phosphate sacks.

MATTIE

I couldn't ask for better material. It looks like bleached linen, and wear!

MONDAY

We've changed a lot of things around the farm in the last few years, Mattie.

MATTIE

I know we have. Instead of a few wagon-loads of fair-to-middlin' corn, we have whiteface cattle all over the place. And you know how proud William is of the way the old gullies have healed.

MONDAY

I guess you might say our land was tired. Now we're resting it from corn, and bringing cattle in to graze on it, and, to fertilize it.

MATTIE

I heard Mr. Carpenter when he was talking to you the other day. He said that more than a million acres in the Tennessee Valley have been destroyed by erosion.

MONDAY

It's worse than that. Nearly all of the land has been damaged. Just the other day one of the men down the road toward Sneedville sold his farm....200 acres, and all he got was \$500. I saw him counting out the money. About all he could get off his farm was a sack of corn.

MATTIE

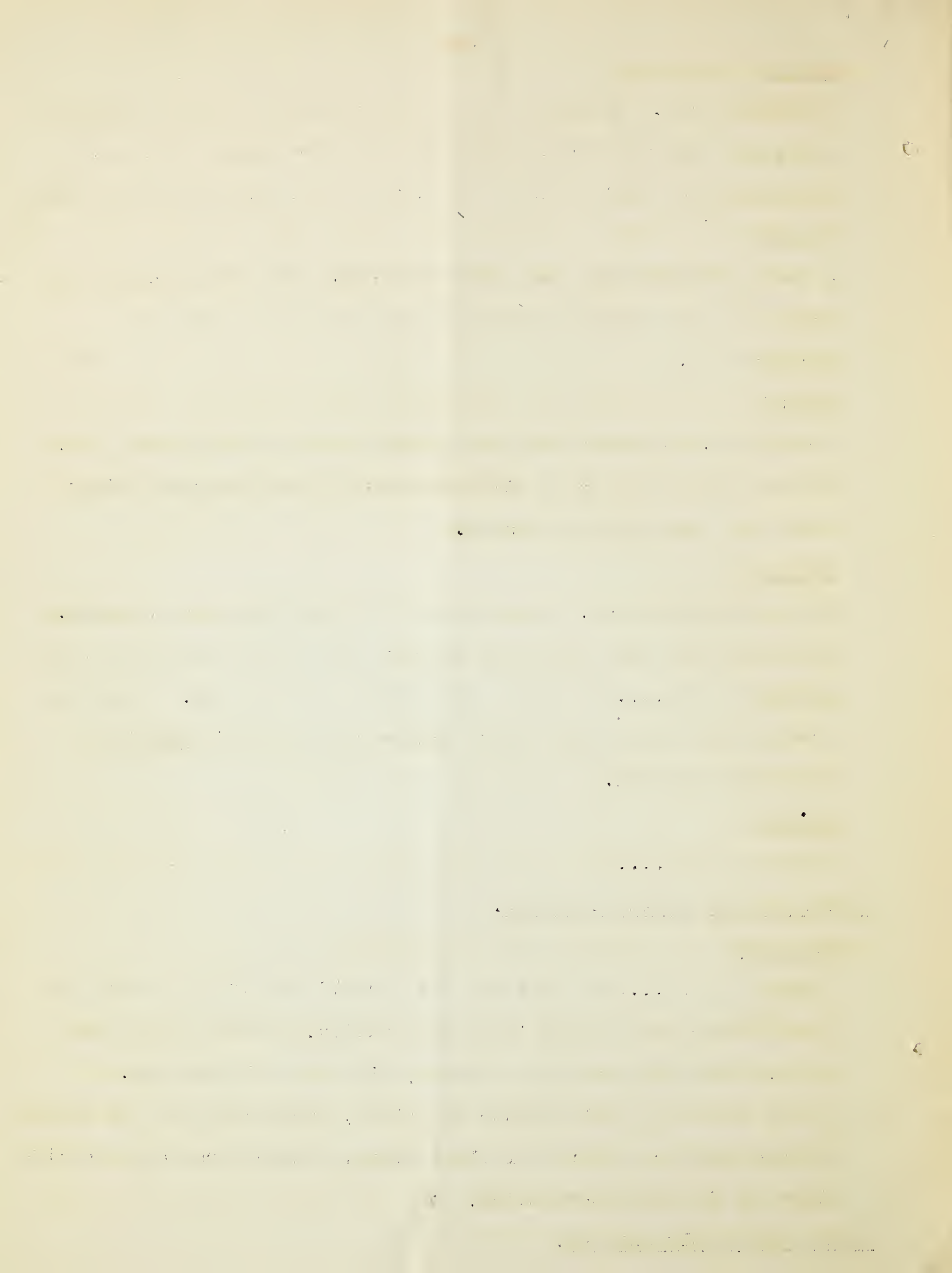
A sack of corn....

ORGAN: Softly behind narrator.

NARRATOR

A sack of corn....and that was all I could get off my little old farm 40 years ago. This is a great valley, watered by a great river. Along its bends and twists, life flows in and out. Cities large and small border the river, farms crowd to the banks and are scattered in the little valleys. Those farms are the life blood of the Tennessee Valley.

ORGAN: Up softly and out.



SOUND: Metronome....

ANNOUNCER

1939....

CARPENTER

Mr. Monday, I knew we weren't going wrong when we asked you to be a unit demonstrator. But I'm simply amazed at the change in your farm.

MONDAY

It's a bit different, Mr. Carpenter. I've only got 3 acres in corn this year, and it'll make 50-60 bushels to the acre. Just about all the rest is in permanent pasture....and I reckon it'll stay that way. That phosphate's fine stuff for pasture.

CARPENTER

You'll find plenty of farmers who'll agree with you. Look what it's done to C. A. Shifley's place!

MONDAY

What I never could figure out was, why in tarnation don't more farmers do something about their soil washing.

CARPENTER

I don't know. I guess it's just because they don't realize what's happening.

ORGAN: Sneak in O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM.

MONDAY

Sometimes I feel like getting me one of those sound trucks and going around the country, raising old billy. A bank is robbed of ten thousand dollars, and the papers carry great big headlines. Three people are killed in a car wreck, and big headlines. But when our soil is robbed...the soil that feeds millions of people we don't think anything about it.

CARPENTER

We need more farmers like you, Mr. Monday.

NARRATOR

Yes, too much of our land is bare. Too much of it is handled the wrong way. But come down to Hancock county, Tennessee.... along a narrow valley fed by many little waters, and let me show you how to make a good living off a small hill farm....without destroying the soil that gives life and blood to the Tennessee Valley.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

That is the true story of James Monday, of Hancock County, Tennessee. And now, once again we turn to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and here is Ewing Jones.

JONES

Thank you, _____. James Monday is doing one of the outstanding jobs of farming in his community. He is showing how a man can take 48 acres of poor land, increase its fertility year after year, and make a good living for a family of six. Ever since he came to the farm 40 years ago, he's been building it up gradually. But his most rapid progress has been in the last five years, when he's had the counsel of the Tennessee Valley Authority County Agricultural Agent J. H. Ashburn, and Assistant County Agent Joe E. Carpenter.

ANNOUNCER

And he's had the help of Old Man Phosphate.

JONES

Oh yes. But of course, that's but one of the soil defense measures that have helped him build up his land. In fact, farmers down south are building well-rounded programs to save their soil.

ANNOUNCER

How about listing them, Ewing?

JONES

I think a more effective way would be for you to read about them. In that way you could find out what erosion control measures are adapted to the various farming conditions. What are you going to do over the holidays, _____?

ANNOUNCER

I thought I would curl up by a cozy fireside and catch up on my reading. Why?

JONES

Then you take this bulletin, "Soil Defense", and find out what you can do to control erosion on your 10,000 acre farm.

ANNOUNCER

That's just a slight exaggeration, but that is an attractive bulletin. What about my friends?

JONES

If they would like a copy of the bulletin, "Soil Defense", tell them to write to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio, and ask for it. They won't be disappointed.

SOUND: Telegraph key clicking....

ANNOUNCER

News in the conservation world!

JONES

This week's news is in the form of several flashes, _____, and since you're an old news commentator from away back, please.

ANNOUNCER

Cambridge, Ohio: 200 farmers, owners of 18,000 acres of land in the Seneca Ford watershed, have adopted complete farm plans designed to control erosion in that sloping area. The farms are located in Guernsey, Noble, Belmont and Monroe Counties.

Mount Liberty, Ohio: J. S. Snyder announces that his hay yields have more than doubled, and his corn yields have almost doubled, since he began using more agricultural limestone and longer crop rotations.

Murray, Kentucky: Farmers cooperating with the Soil Conservation Service through the Murray CCC camp planted nearly a million trees and shrubs to control erosion this year. That number is more than any other Soil Conservation Service camp in the Ohio Valley has planted in a like time.

Vincennes, Indiana: Knox County farmers will hold a public hearing on January 5, to determine whether they want to form a soil conservation district. More than 200 soil conservation districts have been formed in the United States thus far.

SOUND: Boom of cannon.

ANNOUNCER

This Week We Salute!

JONES

This week we salute Mr. J. S. Roscoe, of Noble County, Indiana. His 417-acre farm has been in the family for four generations, and Mr. Roscoe is determined to preserve it for the fifth and succeeding generations. He was one of the first farmers to sign a cooperative agreement with the Kendallville CCC camp. His soil-saving measures include strip cropping, diversion ditches, gully control, sod outlets, pasture treatment, and liming, with marl dug from his own farm. A salute to J. S. Roscoe, of Noble County, Indiana.

ANNOUNCER

And now, Ewing....looking ahead.

JONES

Next week, most of us will be making New Year's resolutions. And next week we want to tell about a farmer who made a resolution never to plow his land...because his land was too steep for cultivation. He made good, by turning grass into money. So next week, "The Farm Without a Plow."

ORGAN: BRIEF BRIDGE.

SOUND: (In background) Tap dancing, fiddle playing, or something similar to indicate stage entertainment.

FIRST TROUPER

Oh, me. These five-a-day shows are making an old man out of me.

SECOND TROUPER

No, the show business isn't what it used to be. Now, when I was playing at the Roxy in New York....

FIRST TROUPER

Yaa...the closest you ever got to the Roxy was an audition for the Boone County Jamboree.

SECOND TROUPLER

Is that so? Listen, I'll have you know that I was once acclaimed the most versatile performer on the Great White Way.

FIRST TROUPER

Who acclaimed you? Yourself?

SOUND: Entertainment ends, and great applause comes up.

GIRL (rushing in)

Do you hear that? Listen to that applause! I tell you, I'm a great success. Oh, I'm so happy!

FIRST TROUPER

OH, yeah? That applause isn't for you.

GIRL

Then who is it for?

FIRST TROUPER

It's for _____. He's going to tell them how to get a copy of the illustrated bulletin "Soil Defense."

AN NOUNCER

If you would like a copy of the bulletin, "Soil Defense," send a letter or a penny postcard to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio.

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

ANNOUNCER

Next week: The Farm Without a Plow.

SOUND: Thunder and rain...

